

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229476

EXDIS FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 21553, ACTION SECSTATE 08 SEPT:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 21553

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, PINT, LE, SY, IS, UR

SUBJECT: GROMYKO ON SITUATION IN LEBANON

1. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SALT DISCUSSIONS  
MID-DAY SEPTEMBER 8, PAUL WARNKE AND I MET PRIVATELY  
WITH GROMYKO AND DOBRYNIN (WARNKE'S INTERPRETER  
ACCOMPANIED HIM, SO GROMYKO ASKED SUKHODREV TO SIT  
IN). FOLLOWING A BRIEF EXCHANGE BETWEEN WARNKE  
AND GROMYKO ON DISARMAMENT MATTERS, REPORTED  
SEPARATELY, I RAISED THE CAMP DAVID TALKS AND THE  
LEBANESE SITUATION WITH GROMYKO, NOTING I WAS DOING  
SO UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE SECRETARY AND IN  
LINE WITH OUR PAST PRACTICE OF BRIEFING THE SOVIET  
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SIDE ON MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS.

2. REGARDING THE CURRENT SUMMIT TALKS, I TOLD  
GROMYKO I WOULD NOT TAKE UP HIS TIME WITH A LENGTHY  
ORAL PRESENTATION BUT WOULD LEAVE HIM A NON-PAPER  
BASED UPON MY TALKING POINTS (AS PER ATTACHMENT TWO,  
DEPARTMENT ACTION MEMORANDUM OF SEPTEMBER 1,

NUMBER 7817236).

3. REGARDING LEBANON, I SAID I HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY THE SECRETARY TO EXPRESS TO GROMYKO OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE LEBANESE SITUATION, AND THEN MADE THE POINTS OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH THREE OF STATE 225265. I ADDED THAT I WAS CONFIDENT GROMYKO SHARED OUR DESIRE TO AVOID A WIDENING OF THE CONFLICT IN THIS AREA, AND THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD DO WHAT IT COULD TOWARD THIS END. I ALSO NOTED THAT I WAS SURE SECRETARY VANCE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN GROMYKO'S COMMENTS CONCERNING HIS RECENT MEETING WITH SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM.

4. GROMYKO RESPONDED THAT OF COURSE THE SYRIANS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE LEBANESE SITUATION, AND DID NOT WISH TO EXACERBATE THAT SITUATION. THE SYRIANS HAVE ASSURED US, GROMYKO CONTINUED, THAT THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP ADHERES TO THE SAME POSITION. THE SYRIANS AND THE PALESTINIANS HAVE MAJOR CONCERNS, HOWEVER, REGARDING THE ACTIONS AND INTENTIONS OF ISRAEL. THE SOVIET SIDE RECOGNIZES THAT THE SYRIANS HAVE GOOD GROUNDS FOR SUCH CONCERNS -- REGARDING THE ISRAELIS AS WELL AS CERTAIN CIRCLES IN LEBANON. AFTER ALL, ISRAEL RECENTLY UNDERTOOK AGGRESSIVE AND PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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LEBANON. AND ISRAELI LEADERS NOW SAY THEY'LL TAKE THIS OR THAT ACTION IF EVENTS DO NOT PLEASE THEM.

5. AS FOR THE SOVIET POSITION, SAID GROMYKO, WE OF COURSE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CALM SITUATION IN LEBANON. THE AMERICAN SIDE COULD BE SURE THAT IF THE USSR LEARNS OF ANY SYRIAN OR PALESTINIAN INTENTIONS TO EXACERBATE THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, WE WILL TELL THEM BLUNTLY OF OUR OPPOSITION TO SUCH ACTIONS. BUT AT PRESENT, THE USSR HAS NO INFORMATION THAT WOULD CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH INTENTIONS. GROMYKO REPEATED THAT THE USSR WANTED TO SEE A CALM SITUATION, AND THE USSR WOULD EXERT ALL OF ITS INFLUENCE IN THAT DIRECTION. HE ADDED THAT OF COURSE THE SOVIET UNION WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE USG ACT IN THE SAME VEIN, TO RESTRAIN ISRAEL BOTH IN WORDS AND DEEDS.

6. I SAID THAT ON THE BASIS OF MY EXPERIENCE AS AMBASSADOR IN TEL AVIV, I KNEW THAT THE SURVIVAL OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN LEBANON WAS A DEEPLY EMOTIONAL PROBLEM IN ISRAEL, AND IT WOULD BE MOST

UNFORTUNATE IF SYRIAN ACTIONS INFLAMED THOSE  
EMOTIONS. GROMYKO COMMENTED THAT EMOTIONAL CONCERN  
COULD NOT JUSTIFY UNJUST ACTIONS BY ONE SOVEREIGN  
STATE AGAINST ANOTHER; I NOTED THAT I WAS NOT  
SPEAKING IN LEGAL TERMS BUT OF A PRACTICAL PROBLEM.  
AS A PRACTICAL MATTER, ONE SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT  
THE ISRAELI ATTITUDE TOWARD THIS QUESTION. IN ANY  
CASE, IT WAS GOOD TO HEAR THAT THE USSR SHARED OUR  
CONCERN OVER THE LEBANESE SITUATION, AND I WOULD  
OF COURSE REPORT GROMYKO'S VIEWS TO SECRETARY VANCE.

7. GROMYKO CONCLUDED WITH THE STANDARD LINE THAT  
THE U.S. WAS NOT ADEQUATELY EXERCISING ITS CONSIDERABLE  
INFLUENCE OVER ISRAEL. I SAID I SAW NO POINT IN  
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DEBATING THIS QUESTION: WE HAD COVERED THIS GROUND  
BEFORE AND WERE FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS.  
GROMYKO COULD BE SURE THAT MY GOVERNMENT WAS DOING  
EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO RESTRAIN THE PRINCIPAL  
PARTICIPANTS. IN ANY CASE, MORE IMPORTANT  
AT PRESENT WAS FOR US TO KEEP CHANNELS OF COMMUNICA-  
TION OPEN REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION.  
GROMYKO AGREED ON NEED TO DO THIS. TOON UNQUOTE.  
CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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